

CITY OF CHANDLER

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedures for the administration of the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

II. POLICY

The City of Chandler recognizes the importance of providing educational assistance opportunities to City employees and has established guidelines for the administration of a tuition reimbursement program. Eligible employees may be reimbursed for courses taken at a fully accredited school, college, or authorized technical trade school. Accreditation must be documented by an institution accrediting association. Courses of education or training must be in areas related to a City career field and must meet eligibility requirements.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Department Directors are responsible for ensuring that all eligible employees follow the policies and procedures outlined in this regulation.
- B. The Human Resources Director is responsible for approving/disapproving requests for tuition reimbursements and for verifying that employees have received a passing grade of "C" or higher, or its equivalent where letter grades are not used, that completion of the appropriate course(s) is documented, and that reimbursement is appropriate.
- C. Employees are responsible for the timely submission of Tuition Reimbursement requests to Human Resources, for ensuring the requests for reimbursement are completed accurately, and for submitting proof of payment and passing grade as part of the reimbursement request.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility

- 1. Any regular employee (full-time or part-time) who has successfully completed the initial probationary period and any public safety employee on an initial 12 month probationary period who has completed at least 6 months of the initial probationary period and is eligible for vacation benefits is eligible for consideration of tuition reimbursements.
- 2. Employees must be actively working in a budgeted position of 20 or more hours per week (or be in a paid status for 20 or more hours per week) to be eligible to participate in the tuition reimbursement program.
- 3. Courses of education or training must be in areas related to a City career field and must meet the following requirements:
 - a. The course must be directly related to professional development in the employee's current City job.
 - b. The course will make the employee more promotable within the City and is related to a

- current City position, which is within the employee's realistic promotional line.
- c. The course work is required in a curriculum program leading to a degree or certification that is applicable (required or preferred) to a current City of Chandler job classification.
 - d. The courses of education are for an undergraduate or graduate program of study.
Courses of education for PhD programs of study are not eligible (employees currently enrolled in a PhD program as of December 31, 2004 will be grandfathered in).
 - e. It must be a course taken during the employee's off-duty time.
 - f. The course must be taken at a fully accredited school, college, or authorized technical trade school.
4. The maximum reimbursement allowed per tax calendar year is a total of \$3,200.00. The date of reimbursement will determine to which tax year the cost will be charged. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted for reimbursement within 90 days of the end date of the class. If the employee completes courses which exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement, the employee shall be responsible for payment of the balance.
 5. Reimbursement shall include only tuition costs and is not authorized to cover the cost of normal academic expenses such as special fees, laboratory fees, registration fees, books, supplies and other such materials and services.
 6. The amount of reimbursement shall be reduced by any financial assistance the employee receives from any outside source. When requesting tuition reimbursement, the employee must indicate on the Tuition Reimbursement Request any financial assistance received from an outside source, which the employee is not required to repay.
 7. Tuition costs, to the amount authorized, may be paid to the employee upon presentation of proof of tuition payment and a passing grade of "C" or higher.
 8. If an employee terminates from City employment for any reason within twelve months of being reimbursed for a course, the employee shall return to the City 100% of the reimbursement.
 9. This regulation does not provide for reimbursement or direct pay for courses, seminars, workshops, or memberships required by a Department. Such training should be directly financed by the appropriate cost centers.

B. Reimbursement Request Procedures

1. Preapproval of tuition reimbursement requests is not required. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that courses being taken qualify for reimbursement based on the eligibility established in Section IV.A of this policy.
2. Upon completion of the first course in the program, the employee submits the reimbursement request for the class along with an official copy of the degree plan obtained from the school or the course description, whichever is applicable, to Human Resources. Submission of a copy of the degree plan is only required for the initial course taken for the program. The employee

must also submit proof of payment and proof of a passing grade to Human Resources. Human Resources will process all eligible reimbursement requests through the City bi-weekly payroll system.

3. Human Resources will determine the employee's eligibility and the reimbursable tuition amount; verify the accreditation of the school; and submit approved reimbursement requests to payroll for payment.
4. As additional courses are completed, the employee will submit reimbursement requests for the courses along with proof of payment and proof of the passing grade to Human Resources. Human Resources will process all eligible reimbursements through the City bi-weekly payroll system.
5. All requests for reimbursement must be submitted with complete documentation to Human Resources by noon on the second Wednesday of the payroll period to be paid on the following payday.
6. Approved and subsequently paid tuition reimbursement requests shall be made part of the employee's personnel record.

V. APPROVAL

This policy is effective December 18, 2011 and supersedes City of Chandler Tuition Reimbursement Policy dated September 19, 2005.



Richard Dlugas, City Manager

11-4-11
Date